

## **Transportation: Operations: Emergencies**

### **Emergency evacuation—**

The following are instances when an operator should evacuate the school bus:

- 1) Fire or Danger of Fire. Proximity to an existing fire or gasoline or other combustible material combined with an inability to move the bus is considered danger of fire and pupils should be evacuated. Likewise, the operator should stop and evacuate the bus immediately if the engine or any portion of the bus is on fire. In either case, pupils should be moved to a safe place 100 feet or more from the bus and instructed to remain there until the operator has determined that the danger has passed.
- 2) Unsafe position. When the bus is stopped because of an accident, mechanical failure, road conditions, or human failure, the operator must determine immediately whether it is safer for pupils to remain on or evacuate the bus.
- 3) Mandatory Evacuations. The operator must evacuate the bus when:
  - a) The final stopping point is in the path of a train or adjacent to railroad tracks.
  - b) The stopped position of the bus may change and increase the danger. The operator should be certain that the evacuation is carried out in a manner which affords maximum safety for the pupils.
  - c) The stopped position of the bus is such that there is a danger of collision.
  - d) Sight distance. In normal traffic conditions, the bus should be visible for a distance of 300 feet or more. A position over a hill or around a curve where such visibility does not exist should be considered reason for evacuation.

### **Emergency evacuation drills—**

The Board recognizes that there is an urgent need, due to the increased number of pupils being transported and the ever-increasing number of accidents on the highways, to instruct pupils on how to properly vacate a school bus in case of an emergency. Without training, pupils may block the emergency door by all trying to exit at the same time. There is also a danger when pupils jump from the rear emergency door exit. To avoid these situations, schools should organize and conduct emergency exit drills for all pupils who ride the school bus.

In conducting school bus evacuation drills, school officials should consider and observe the guidelines and procedures set forth in the Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations, "Instructions for Conducting Emergency Exit Drills."

*Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations, Appendix 5, p. 129-30 (2004)*

### **Emergency procedures—**

The Board will develop an emergency plan consistent with the following guidelines, in consultation with the Pupil Transportation Director and the personnel of those agencies that will render service during emergencies.. Copies of the plan should be carried in each bus. The plan will instruct the District Pupil Transportation Director, school administrators, teachers, drivers, maintenance and service personnel, pupils and others of the procedures to be followed in the event of:

- 1) Accidents. The plan should spell out the following:
  - a) How to prevent further accidents.
  - b) How to evacuate and control pupils.
  - c) How to evaluate the need for medical assistance.
  - d) How to get help from the police, fire department and the garage.
  - e) How to collect and record data essential to the preparation of the required accident reports. An operational plan to provide two-way communication with parents and/or guardians is imperative.
- 2) Sudden Disability of Driver. The plan should establish procedures for handling situations resulting in the fatal injury or disability of the bus driver. The District should communicate these procedures to the appropriate persons.
- 3) Road Failure. The plan should cover the procedure for:
  - a) Securing the bus.
  - b) Controlling the passengers.
  - c) Diagnosing the causes of road failure.
  - d) Notifying school officials.
  - e) Recovering the disabled school bus.
- 4) Inclement weather conditions. The emergency plan should provide procedures for determining:
  - a) When schools are to be closed.
  - b) Who is to make such decisions.
  - c) How decisions are to be relayed to parents, pupils, school officials and staff, drivers, contractors, maintenance and service personnel, the news media and others.
  - d) How to react to such natural phenomena as floods, earthquakes, etc.
- 5) Other types of emergency situations. The emergency plan should cover such conditions and events as:
  - a) Road or bridge washouts and landslides that might block school bus routes.
  - b) Bus hijacking.

Created:  
Modified:

CJDD

*Standards for Utah School Buses and Operations, p. 82 (2004)*